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Larynx.

An
Inaugural Dissertation
on the
Diseases of the Larynx,
submitted
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Medical Professors
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Diseases of the Larynx.

The Larynx is a kind of cartilaginous box, situated at the superior part of the trachea, forming the origin of the entrance to the lungs. It is composed of very delicate and elastic cartilages, united together by membranes and several small muscles.

This structure being the "instrument of the voice" and intimately concerned in the faculty of speech, which is confessedly one of the most important and ennobling attributes that man possesses over the brute creation, its diseases are certainly deserving of much attention and accurate investigation. — The forms of morbid action to which it is most liable are Cynanche & Phthisis, or Inflammation and Consumption, which will therefore be made the subjects of the following dissertation: —

1. Cynanche Laryngea.

This disease is of a local nature, is acute and of short duration. It affects the mucous membrane of the epiglottis, or rima glottidis, or, most probably, of both these parts, and is attended with a high degree of inflammatory action, occasioning impeded deglutition and difficult respiration.

It is only recently that this fatal variety of sore throat has attracted the attention of medical practitioners, having been generally confounded with Bronchitis or Croup, and indeed there is so much resemblance in their symptoms, as well as proximity in their seats & similarity in the mode of treatment required for their cure, that it is scarcely to be wondered at that they should have been identified. But that they are not the same diseases is satisfactorily proved, by their affecting different parts. Thus, Cynanche Laryngea

is seated in the larynx, whilst Cynanche Tracheali is seated in the trachea. It is very probable, however, that, occasionally, they may attend & accompany each other. and Cheyne, in speaking of the difficult respiration in Croup, says "I must suppose that, along with the inflammation of the trachea, there is a spasmodic affection of the larynx; which I am the more inclined to believe because, in the first stage, I have observed the breathing, which is always difficult, performed at particular times with incomparably more distress than at others".

The following peculiarities will assist us in distinguishing between them.

In Cynanche Laryngea, the symptoms are, an uneasy sensation in the larynx, difficult & painful deglutition, partial swelling of the fauces, a supervening & perpetually increasing difficulty of breathing, nearly amounting to a sense of suffocation; the voice is extremely hoarse or reduced to a scarcely audible whisper; and it is not like croup

confined to children. In Cynanche Tracheali, there is as difficulty of respiration, without any swelling of the fauces or pain in deglutition, & the expirations especially in coughing, are very shrill; the fever in both is of an inflammatory type.

The usual Cause of this disease is exposure to cold or damp air, which produces an inflammatory determination to the parts affected.

It comes on with chilliness, succeeded by heat & fever, which are soon followed by, as hoarseness and indistinctness of voice, laborious respiration and pain, or as it were, a stricture, in the throat, threatening immediate suffocation; the pulse is quick and feeble, the eyes suffused with blood & somewhat protruding, the countenance has a livid or swollen appearance, the tongue is furred, the tonsils, uvula & pharynx present a dark red appearance on inspection, and any attempt to swallow is attended with excruciating pain and difficulty.

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

the trachea but also the bronchial [illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

2. Phthisis Laryngeal.

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

to account the cause [illegible] death [illegible]
in [illegible] lungs. But the reason he [illegible] [illegible]
to account for [illegible] their existence, [illegible] have been
called [illegible] to the peculiar [illegible] of the [illegible]
[illegible] because [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible]
[illegible] to [illegible] the [illegible]. I [illegible] [illegible] struck
[illegible], however, that the state of these parts might
account for the [illegible] of the voice; & on examination
[illegible] found in the [illegible] of the consistence
of a poultice & formed into a plug, completely closed
up its cavity, under the cloths, & the lining membrane
was ulcerated in several places.

That this disease is not of such
rare occurrence, as many seem to think, I am per-
-suaded, from my having known two cases of it
within a year in a range of observation not unu-
-sually extensive, and Cheyne said, "That such cases
[illegible] not so [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible]
[illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible]
I am [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] practice, I have seen

occurs in the case of [illegible] larynx &c. — with [illegible] terminated [illegible]..

In view of the pathology of Phthisis Laryngea it would seem that it is an advanced inflammation of the mucous membrane terminating in thickening & ulceration of the mucous & lining membrane & the cartilages.

It commences with an irritation in the larynx & pain which is not removed except on pressure [illegible] with a tickling sensation, [illegible] cough, an alteration in the sounds of the voice, hoarseness, difficult deglutition, it is not uncommon to have the cough [illegible] produces fits of suffocation — in the advanced stage it is attended with many of the symptoms of [illegible] Phthisis Pulmonalis a copious purulent [illegible] expectoration [illegible] it may after continuance some time be extended [illegible] to the lungs, & then pass into the ulcerating form of Pulmonary Consumption [illegible] its termination [illegible] from [illegible] the patient being exhausted by the hectic fever & its concomitants. —

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible] the [illegible]
[illegible]

[illegible]
[illegible]
[illegible]
[illegible]
[illegible]
sufficient..

[illegible]
[illegible]
to be repeated as often as may be necessary.

[illegible]
[illegible]
[illegible]
[illegible]
[illegible]
[illegible]
[illegible] consistency.
[illegible]
[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

Inhalations of the vapour of Hoffman's anodyne liquor or of the extract of cicuta & warm water would probably be found very beneficial during the attacks of difficult respiration.

An interesting & important discovery relative to the cause, & consequently the cure, of Phthisis Laryngea, has recently been made by the distinguished Professor of anatomy in this University, to whom our science is already indebted for many considerable improvements. It is, that this disease is sometimes caused by an elongation of the uvula, which by hanging down in the throat produces so great a degree of irritation as not only to excite laryngeal but even pulmonary consumption itself. — This form of the disease is attended with a continual tickling or uneasiness in the throat & a very frequent hard dry cough, which as the disease advances becomes very great, the patient strangles & his face grows livid. Upon examination we will find no other disease

than an elongation of the uvula.

In this case we may, by strong astringent gargles sometimes excite the uvula to contraction; but if they fail we should cut off the depending portion with a pair of scissors. We are informed by Dr. Chapman, in his lectures, "that his is a trifling operation, being attended with neither hemorhage nor pain"; & that its effects "are truly astonishing"; He has known several cases of patients who had been treated for years for pulmonary consumption, & had been reduced nearly to the grave, "being perfectly cured & restored to health in a few months, or even weeks, by the operation". Although I have never had an opportunity of witnessing this myself, yet I can readily believe facts stated on such high authority, & will conclude the subject with a hope, that the discovery, as it has been made public, will prove as extensively beneficial as its illustrious author could desire. — —